

What is claimed is:

1. An apparatus for aiding a user to follow a schedule for taking an item of medicines/supplements dispensed as units of dosage in any form of pills, capsules, pouches of powders, which comprises:

a plurality of containers, each container adapted to hold a plurality of dosages of one of the items respectively;

a plurality of mechanisms, one for each said container, for releasing each one of said plurality of dosages from said container respectively, each dosage released one at a time;

a memory for storing a program for operating said apparatus ;

processor for executing said program;

a memory for storing a form for listing an event schedule;

said event schedule being a series of events each event defined by an event action and a time when said event action should occur during a program period, said event action being release of at least one of said dosages from said respective container ;

a keyboard for entering said event schedule into said form in said memory;

a screen for displaying said form including said event schedule;

said form including said event schedule including:

(i) a list of numbers, each number of said list corresponding to one of said containers;

(ii) for each number, a name of an item to be dispatched from said container;

(iii) for each number and corresponding item, a list of events whereby an event schedule is created;

means for generating an event signal, said event signal being at least one of an audio and visual signal as each said dosage is released whereby said user is informed that said dosage has been released for ingestion according to said schedule.

2. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein said event signal comprises an underline under said time of said event on said screen whereby said form becomes a history of events occurring during a program period wherein said program period is a length of time during which all event actions have been executed.

3. The apparatus of claim 2 wherein said program period is 24 hours.

4. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein said processor comprises:

an event clock arranged to count an event period beginning immediately after any one of said events occurs;

said event period being a period of time between two successive events; and

said memory comprises a subevent memory containing a subevent schedule of subevents occurring during any event period;

said subevent defined by a subevent action and a time during said event period when said subevent action occurs;

said processor coupled to said subevent memory and said event clock to initiate said subevent action when said event clock reaches a time during said event period when said subevent is scheduled to occur;

5. The apparatus of claim 4 wherein said apparatus comprises:

a first lamp; and

said subevent action is at least one of:

(i) turning on a first lamp;

(ii) actuating a buzzer;

and said subevent time is a selected time period prior to said event time whereby a user is alerted that event time is approaching.

6. The apparatus of claim 4 wherein said apparatus comprises:

a second lamp; and

said subevent action is at least one of:

(i) turning on a second lamp;

(ii) actuating a buzzer;

and said subevent time is a selected time beginning with said event time whereby a user is alerted that event time has arrived.

7. The apparatus of claim 4 wherein said apparatus comprises:

a third lamp; and

said subevent action is at least one of:

- (i) turning on a third lamp;
- (ii) actuating a buzzer;

and said subevent time is a selected time after said event time whereby a user is alerted that event time has passed.

8. The apparatus of claim 5 wherein said first lamp has a first color.

9. The apparatus of claim 6 wherein said second lamp has a second color.

10. The apparatus of claim 7 wherein said third lamp has a third color.

11. The apparatus of claim 1 comprising:

an event counter arranged for counting a number of events that have occurred during a current program period; .

said processor communicating with said event counter and arranged to:

- (i) generate a completion signal when all events of said event schedule have been executed;
- (ii) in response to said completion signal, store said form having said events underlined in a history file;

(iii) display a form on said screen having a next period date in preparation for executing said program during a following program period;

12.. The apparatus of claim1 which comprises an inventory memory for keeping track of quantities of dosage remaining in the containers.

13 The apparatus of claim 1 wherein each said release mechanism is operated manually. :

14. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein:

each said release mechanism is coupled to an electric power source and said processor and is operably arranged to open according to said event schedule; and

said appaaratus comprises:means controlled by said user for withdrawing said dosage that has been released.

means for generating a withdrawal signal that said dosage has been withdrawn.

said withdrawal signal being an icon appearing in a respective event column of said form on said screen.

15. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein said means for releasing comprises:

each said container having a port for passing each one of said dosages;

a plurality of sliding doors, one of each doors for a respective one of said containers;

each door operably arranged in combination with said respective container wherein, in a first position of said door, said port of said container is closed and in a second position of said door, said port is open permitting that, when said dosages in said container are stack against said door, a dosage adjacent said port passes through said port.

16. The apparatus of claim 15 which comprises:

a plurality of means for opening said doors responsive to an open signal from said processor, one means for opening for each one door, respectively;

said means for opening responsive to an open signal generated by said program.

17. The apparatus of claim 15 wherein said means for opening said door is a solenoid coupled to a respective one of said doors and communicating with said computer for receiving said open signal.

18. The apparatus of claim 13 which comprises means controlled by said user for withdrawing said dosage that has been released.

15. The program of claim 14 which comprises:

said program having an execute memory in which is stored a history of withdrawals by said user including time of withdrawal and dosages withdrawn;

means for generating a withdrawal signal that said dosage has been withdrawn

said program having an execute memory and said computer programmed to store in said execute memory a history of withdrawals by said user including time of withdrawal and dosages withdrawn in response to said withdrawal signals input to said computer;

means for outputting a display of said history.

16. The apparatus of claim 14 wherein said means controlled by said user for withdrawing said dosage that has been released comprises:

a tray positioned adjacent said plurality of doors operably arranged to catch said dosage released by any one of said plurality of doors;

a pusher arranged for operation by said user to push said dosage caught by said tray out of an end of said tray;

withdrawal signal means arranged to generate said withdrawal signal when said user



operates said pusher;

said withdrawal signal means coupled to said computer permitting said program to store

said history of withdrawals.

17. The apparatus of claim 1 which comprises:

a plurality of counter means, one counter means for each container;

said program having an inventory memory for storing a total of quantity of dosages of each medicine stored in respective container;

said program having an inventory memory for storing the number of dosages of each medicine stored in said respective container;

said program arranged to decrement said quantity as each dosage is released from said respective container.

18. A system for aiding a user to follow a schedule for taking an item of medicines/supplements dispensed as units of dosage in any form of pills, capsules, pouches of powders, which comprises:

a self contained plurality of containers, each container adapted to hold a plurality of dosages

of one of the items respectively; and a plurality of mechanisms, one for each said container, for releasing each one of said plurality of dosages from said container respectively, each dosage released one at a time;

a cell phone;

a server computer; adapted for communicating with said plurality of containers and cell phone through an internet provider;

said server computer having a memory for storing a program for operating said apparatus, cell phone, a memory for storing a table for listing an event schedule;

and a processor for executing said program;

said event schedule being a series of events each event defined by an event action and a time when said event action should occur during a program period, said event action being release of at least one of said dosages from said respective container ;

a keyboard coupled to said server computer for entering said event schedule into said table in said memory;

a monitor coupled to said server computer for displaying said table including said event schedule;

said table including said event schedule including:

(i) a list of numbers, each number of said list corresponding to one of said containers;

(ii) for each number, a name of an item to be dispatched from said container;

(iii) for each number and corresponding item, a list of events whereby an event schedule is created;

said server computer arranged for sending a signal to said a selected one of said mechanisms to release an item according to said event schedule and an event signal to said cell phone, activating said cell phone to generate an audio event signal as each said dosage is released whereby said user is informed that said dosage has been released for ingestion according to said event schedule whereby said system enables an operator to control dispensing items from said containers worn by a patient possessing said containers and cell phone, by said operator operating said keyboard to enter said event schedule into said server computer and said operator is enabled to maintain surveillance of said client's adhering to said event schedule by observing said table displayed by said monitor.

19. The system of claim 18 wherein said event signal comprises an underline under said time of said event on said screen whereby said form becomes a history of events occurring during a program period wherein said program period is a length of time during which all event actions have been executed.

20. The apparatus of claim 19 wherein said program period is 24 hours.